



CITY OF BURLINGTON, VERMONT
**CITY COUNCIL TRANSPORTATION, ENERGY &
UTILITIES COMMITTEE**

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Councilor Maxwell Tracy, Chair, WARD 2
Councilor, Tom Ayres, WARD 7
Councilor William “Chip” Mason, WARD 5

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DRAFT: Transportation, Energy and Utilities Committee of the City Council

Tuesday, September 10, 2013 at 4:45 – 7:00 PM

DPW Front Conference Room

–MINUTES–

Members present: Chair, Maxwell Tracy
Tom Ayres
Chip Mason

Others present: Barbara Grimes, BED
Norm Baldwin, DPW
Erin Demers, DPW
Guillermo Gomez, DPW
Nicole Losch, DPW
Chapin Spencer, DPW
Steve Norman

Chair Tracy called the meeting to order at 4:50 pm.

1. Agenda
Chair Tracy moved to accept agenda, Ayres second. All in favor.
2. Public Forum
3. Minutes of 6/26/2013
Tracy motioned to adopt minutes. Ayers second to approve. All in favor

Item 4: Arbitration of Winooski One - Barbara Grimes (BED)

Grimes: Can't really provide a detailed update of the arbitration, since we are currently in the middle of depositions. Arbitration should take place during the first week of October. A panel will determine the fair market value for the facility.

An update on other things happening with Burlington Electric:

- BED is currently working on a new website for the smart meters. Through a program called Energy Engage, it is now possible to track energy consumption up to date, with updates every 8 hours. Burlington Electric entered into a partnership with UVM and the Department of Energy for a research project named Eminder. This project is studying the effectiveness of energy efficiency when the public is informed about energy consumption. Through answers on a questionnaire, Eminder will try to predict a customer's electricity usage. The purpose of this program is to help identify patterns and behaviors and understand why some customers consume more energy than others.
- It is expected that within a year, BED will start looking at the possibility of having time of day rates. The cost of generating energy for BED varies depending on the time of the day. Generating energy during peak hours is costlier than during non-peak hours. Time of day rates would reflect this cost variation. The objective of this would be to reward people who can change some of their habits to consume energy during non-peak hours, when is less expensive for BED to generate electricity.
- BED has a third party service for business customers that provides energy consumption monitoring for commercial customers. Businesses get 50% of the savings and the energy consumption monitoring company gets the other 50%.
- In late October there will be a press event for the new electronic wall in BED that displays in real time outage information on the different power lines throughout the City.

Item 5: Summer Paving Program - Erin Demers (DPW)

Demers: The summer paving program is currently in full swing. The program usually starts in July 1st, which is when funds become available. This year Pike Industries is the contractor doing the paving. We are currently 2.5 weeks away from completion. The reclaim is finished and the milling is already finished. We are currently working on the busier roads (Main and Pearl Streets). There were traffic control plans in place for the busy roads which have allowed us to maintain traffic flow on these busy roads during paving. Some of the work done on Pearl Street right now is from last year's paving plan, but was postponed due to the Pearl Street Reconstruction project. The paving contractor is reestablishing the crown on the roads to deal with some of the drainage issues.

This year concludes the repaving of the major arterials on Burlington. Next year, most of the work will be concentrated on residential streets.

Ayres: How long is a repaved street expected to last?

Demers: Depends on the road. Not all roads get the same type of traffic use. Some roads like Shelburne will last about 5 years. Pine Street 8-10 years. Residential streets are expected to last 20-30 years.

Repaving work is very disruptive, but Burlington residents have been very patient and cooperative. CCTA has also done a great job sending people out on the field to help with detouring.

Mason: When people have complaints about the state of roads, how are these complaints dealt with?

Demers: Residents always get a call back. They are usually informed about the process behind the selection of the streets for each year's paving program.

Mason: Has the City ever considered some kind of impact fee depending on what type of traffic associated with each site/business?

Baldwin: Impact fees are more related to operation and signalization. These are one-time fees.

Demers: There are multiple variables that can cause the deterioration of a road besides the type of traffic that uses it. The type and stability of the soil, the water content, etc. also have an influence in the road deterioration.

Baldwin: There is a developed method to determine which roads need to be repaved, using Micropaver, field verifying the information from Micropaver, etc. With the current funding available for repaving, the condition of the city roads has seen significant improvement.

Item 6: Storm/waste water backups into residential properties - Norm Baldwin (DPW):

Baldwin: The City has been hit lately by severe storms that have caused damage in multiple parts of the City. Examples of this can be seen in Manhattan Drive and Champlain Street. Some of these storms have reached the intensity of 25 year storms. These storms have had such intensity those even roads that had had preventive work done recently have also suffered damage, such as Prospect, Dale, Maple.

The first step that DPW has taken to tackle the problems caused by the storms has been to put in place a method of communication between residents and the Department so residents are better prepared and know how to protect themselves. DPW has purchased a series of pumps that will be provided for residents to use to take the edge off, as a form of quick response. For the long term, DPW needs to look at the collection system and decide what needs to be done and how to go about doing it. The first step for this is to develop a new model of the storm/wastewater system. Parts of the system have choke points and the model will help identify these. There is already an RFP to develop a hydraulic model for downtown. The model will help visualize what repairs make sense financially. In the meantime we are trying to see what we can do for localized problems. At the same time, we need to be thoughtful about how water will be moved, since we want to avoid creating problems where there weren't any.

Ayres: Can you talk about the problems that happened in the New North End?

Baldwin: In the New North End, there was a storm line tied to a sanitary line. During one storm event, the storm line was under so much pressure that it backed up into people's homes. Dale Road is currently being looked at.

Tracy: How do the recently approved increased funding tie into all this?

Baldwin: This money helped fund the new stormwater technician position. There is not a lot of new money that was approved and most of it goes to fund projects that had already been conceived. Outfalls need to be redeveloped, that are lots of aged pipes throughout the city. The recent storms are highlighting all the weaknesses in our system.

Tracy: When there are advances, please come back to the Committee.

Baldwin: Aldrich & Elliott is currently looking at Main and Winooski and developing some alternatives.

Mason: Could some of the improvements be funded with TIF funds?

Baldwin: At first glance, these improvements don't qualify. Maybe if they were part of a project, but at stand-alone projects, it will be difficult to make a case for increased tax revenue

Mason: If you have a washing machine on the basement, are you required to have a backwater prevention device?

Baldwin: Technically, yes. The problem is that some people have come to us before making changes in their basements. Inspections are usually when people report problems and not before the fact.

Mason: How much does a backwater preventer cost?

Baldwin: The city is prepared to provide \$250 per home. Typical cost is in the vicinity of \$1,500.

Mason: It is important to measure the benefit of people addressing local problems vs. fixing the city infrastructure.

Spencer: Giving money directly to residents is always a sensitive issue. You don't want to reward people who didn't follow the code.

Item 7: Parking/No Parking on bike lanes - Norm Baldwin (DPW)

Ayres: I was the one who asked to include this item in the agenda. This issue has come up from members of the biking community at NPA meetings in Wards 4 & 7.

Baldwin: It is by local laws illegal to park in bike lanes. There has been a difference in the expectation of enforceability between DPW and Parking Enforcement. There were recently dialogs that lead to an understanding that if there are enough "No Parking on bike lane" signs, Parking Enforcement would be OK with enforcing these and attorneys would be able to defend citations in court. Along North Avenue there are now more signs in place and John King has been giving out warnings to offenders. In summary, no rules have changed; the difference is that enforcement has now started. There has been a commission ordinance adoption to be able to strictly enforce the prohibition.

Spencer: I would like to commend Norm and Nicole for tackling this issue.

Item 8: North Avenue Corridor Study - Nicole Losch (DPW)

Losch: Since the last meeting there was one advisory committee meeting. The second committee meeting will be next week and the first scheduled public meeting will be in mid-October. Right now we are working on a web input tool that is to be launched before the public meeting. The goals of the first few meetings are to develop a draft vision, goals, document the existing conditions and get some feedback. After this first cycle of meetings the alternatives will start being developed. The next public meeting will happen on early spring.

Item 9: Colchester/Pearl/Prospect Pilot – Nicole Losch, Guillermo Gomez (DPW)

Losch: The pilot project started in mid-August. The pilot involved the removal of approximately 18 parking spaces along Pearl and South Prospect streets and restriping of the travel lanes along Pearl and South Prospect Streets. Approximately two weeks later all the signal changes went into effect. Data collection will start once the paving program is finished. There will be one more public outreach effort before data collection starts. The pilot program will be revisited in October to decide if the changes implemented should be permanent or should be removed. When the pilot program was conceived, we knew we would have to rely on feedback because the traffic models used to predict impact on traffic flow are not very reliable for skewed intersections. Once the pilot program concludes, there we will report through a city-wide Front Porch Forum post.

Item 10: Dewey Park Pilot – Nicole Losch (DPW)

Losch: This project consisted of a temporary closure of Spring Street between Elmwood Avenue and Walnut Street. This pilot project finished at the end of August. Traffic counts were done, but the data hasn't been compiled yet. The next meeting related to this project should happen in October.

Baldwin: It is important to highlight the number of traffic calming projects that Nicole has been working on.

Losch: Approximately ten projects are at different stages of development.

Baldwin: These projects take a considerable amount of time to go through all the process. It is sometimes hard to find common ground between the vision of the neighborhood and the minimum requirements from the Police and Fire Department vehicles.

Item 11: Councilor's Updates

TEUC Meetings Schedule:

The next TEUC meeting will take place on Tuesday, October 29th at 4:45 and the Front Conference Room at DPW (645 Pine Street). Future meetings will be held on the last Tuesday of the month.

Item 12: Adjourn

Tracy moves to adjourn. Ayres second. All in favor. Adjourned at 6:13 pm.